



WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

Report to the 19th District

Summer 2005



Dear neighbors,

I have lived, worked and raised a family in Southwest Washington, it has been my home and it was an honor to serve as your representative from the 19th district.

My priorities have stayed the same throughout our 105-day session. We need dependable jobs for our communities, affordable health care for our families, and quality schools for our children.

I worked hard to hold the line against new taxes and bring greater accountability to our state government. Families work hard to balance their checkbooks and the state government needs to do the same.

In this report you will find information on some of the major issues that I was involved in. I'm interested in what you think and invite you to contact my office with opinions and thoughts on what we have done or what you would like us to do in the future.

Again, thank you for the honor and privilege of representing you in the Legislature.

Sincerely,

Dean Takko
State Representative
19th Legislative District

Representative Dean Takko

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Committees

- Transportation
- Local Government
- Technology, Energy & Communications
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Our Priorities

Jobs

One of the first responsibilities of government should be ensuring that everyone has access to a good paying job. This year the legislature made job creation one of its top priorities.

Local investments = Jobs



One of the budgets that the Legislature passed this year was the Capital Budget. This budget is the state's main construction fund. This year's budget included \$3.2 billion to build schools and other local

economic development projects. **Included in this was \$42 million for the 19th district.**

A recent University of Washington study estimates that for every \$1 million that is spent in construction by a public or private entity 30.8 jobs are created. Using this model this year's Capital Budget will **create approximately 95,000 jobs with an additional 37,000 jobs created with local matching funds.**

Tax-break for Food Processors

Food processing is the third largest manufacturing employer in Washington State. **I sponsored and passed a bill to exempt fruit and vegetable processors along with their equipment and storage facilities from the state's B&O and sales tax.** Cranberry processing and other agri-businesses have provided good paying jobs and have been the backbone of rural Washington. We do not want to see these businesses leave the state and I was glad we were able to do something to help them out.

Job Development Fund



I was proud to be a sponsor of the Job Development Fund which provides grants to cities, towns and other government entities for projects that **create local jobs, stimulate economic devel-**

opment, and promote community growth. These funds are a win-win for the state. By helping local government, especially in our rural communities, the state can ensure that Washington remains a great place to do business.

Education

Quality schools are vital to driving economic development in Southwest Washington. This year the legislature respected the will of the voters, **fully funding Initiatives 728—reducing class sizes, and 732—improving teacher pay.**

A record investment of \$600 million will fund emergency repairs, modernization and new construction for K-12 schools throughout the state. This money **includes \$5 million for the renovation of Aberdeen High School.**

Higher education received a tremendous boost as we funded 7,900 new enrollment slots in both 2-year and 4-year programs. **Locally, we received over \$20 million for the construction of a Fine Arts Building at Lower Columbia College and just under \$6 million for renovations at Grays Harbor College.**

I also sponsored legislation to examine the possibility of placing a new 4-year University in Southwest Washington. With growing enrollment demands the state must look at new ways to expand access to higher education and I think Southwest Washington would be a perfect place to start.

Health Care

This year the legislature made significant strides to help drive down the skyrocketing costs of healthcare. Here are some of the major reforms we were able to accomplish:

- **Insuring our Children:** Currently there are over 67,000 children in Washington State without health insurance. I co-sponsored legislation that **provides health-care for an additional 38,750 children** and sets the goal of having every child covered by 2011
- **Prescription Drugs:** We passed legislation to expand the state's prescription drug purchasing consortium to allow uninsured Washingtonians – as well as private businesses and labor unions – to become eligible for wholesale discounts. We also passed legislation that will work with the Federal government to **open up prescription drug markets in Canada to Washington consumers.**
- **Small-business health care pool:** I supported legislation to help small employers cope with the rising costs of healthcare. This bill would have created a Small Employer Assistance Program to offer health plans tailored to businesses with 50 or fewer employees.



Report to the 19th District

Government Accountability & Fiscal Responsibility

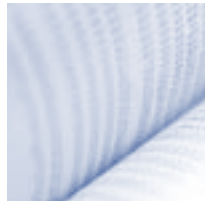
This past session proved to be a difficult one. Once again budgets were tight and the legislature found itself in a precarious situation. **Ultimately, I was not willing to support a gas or general fund tax increase.**

Government needs to be responsible in how it spends our tax dollars. One of the first bills I co-sponsored and passed this legislative session was a strict performance audit measure to make state agencies accountable. We also cut over 1000 government management positions—reducing bureaucracy and saving millions in taxpayer dollars.



Budgets:

The 19th district had many victories in all three of this year's budgets. The following are projects and programs that have received funding for the upcoming biennium.



General Budget

- ✓ **Natural Resource Management:** We received funds for the operation of the Naselle Hatchery, the continuation of the WSU Ghost shrimp research program for Willapa Bay as well as funds to help control the growth of Spartina weed.
- ✓ **Law Enforcement:** Funding was secured for additional security at the Stafford Creek Corrections Center, the upgrading of emergency radio communications for Cowlitz County 911 in the Mt. St. Helens area, and law enforcement for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebrations.



Capital Budget

- ✓ **Local College Improvements:** I helped secure funding for the renovation of Grays Harbor College vocational education building, the Grays Harbor College Education Center in Ilwaco, as well as funding for the construction of the Instructional Fine Arts Building at Lower Columbia College.

- ✓ **Local Tourism:** Included was money for the restoration of the historic Julia Butler Hansen Home, improvements to the World Kite Museum in Long Beach, as well as renovations, utilities upgrades, and multi-use trail projects in Cape Disappointment State Park.
- ✓ **Community Infrastructure:** Improvements to the wastewater treatment plant in Westport, South Bend, and Castle Rock; a new water filter plant in the Chinook Water District; and sewer system improvements in Ilwaco were all funded.
- ✓ **Community Grants:** Money for communities suffering from coastal erosion in Grays Harbor County were also included in the final budget.

Transportation Budget

As a member of the Transportation Committee I worked hard to get the following projects in the final Transportation Budget:

- ✓ Safety improvements along SR 4 and SR 401;
- ✓ Improvements along SR 6 at Willapa River and Lilly Wheaton;
- ✓ Improvements on the Middle Nemah River Bridge on SR 101;
- ✓ Roadside safety improvements at SR 432;
- ✓ Improvements along SR 101 at Bone River;
- ✓ Intersection improvements on US 12/ Clemons Road;
- ✓ Improvements along SR 105 at Smith Creek and North River;
- ✓ Median cross-over along US/12 between Montesano and Elma;
- ✓ Improvements on the interchanges on I-5 and SR 432 at Talley Way; and
- ✓ Improvements on the Abernathy Bridge.



Highway safety in rural Washington is essential to not only prevent deaths but is instrumental in attracting businesses to keep our economy moving.

Representative Dean Takko

Eluding an Officer



This year I teamed up with local law enforcement from the 19th district to sponsor legislation that would toughen penalties on those who try and elude a police officer. Currently the penalty for a first time offense is anywhere from zero to 60 days in jail. **My bill would add an additional twelve months on someone's sentence if they endanger the life of another while**

running from the law.

According to the Washington State Patrol, last year their officers were involved in 389 vehicle pursuits with varying degrees of danger. Statewide there were approximately 900 convictions of eluding an officer. A high-speed chase can endanger innocent bystanders and I hope to stop this deadly practice.

Fighting Meth

Methamphetamine addiction destroys lives, but meth labs threaten more than the addicts. Using chemicals from common medications, meth labs create toxic threats to children, property

and communities as well as imposing huge cleanup costs on taxpayers. **This year the legislature passed a law that restricts access to the cold and allergy medications used to "cook" meth.** It will limit purchases of these products to two packages in a 24 hour period; require retailers to keep these products in locations where they are inaccessible without assistance; and require buyers to show a photo ID and sign a log that law enforcement can use to identify excessive purchases. **A similar law in Oklahoma reduced meth lab incidents by 80 percent.**



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